



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

Walla Walla District
Public Affairs Office

News Release

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McNary pool levels to lower March 23; Ice Harbor spill testing complete

WALLA WALLA, Wash. – River levels on the upstream side of McNary Lock and Dam will lower to 335-335.5 feet mean sea level between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. tomorrow, March 23, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operations officials announced today.

Lake Wallula, the pool area of the Columbia River, upstream of McNary Dam, near Umatilla, Ore., will require the low-pool level so Walla Walla District fish researchers can install tracking instruments at the dam.

“We’re installing hydrophones to detect tagged fish that will be released in mid-April as part of a fish behavior and survival study,” said Dan Feil, a Corps fishery biologist. “This study is one of about 30 different fish research projects Walla Walla District plans to conduct during fiscal year 2006.”

During the installation period, boaters should be aware of the fluctuating pool levels. For example, a boater pulling their vessel ashore during low pool could find their boat back in the water once the pool returns to normal level. If docked in this area, boat owners should ensure their vessels are located in deep enough water to avoid damage during the installation period.

After 3 p.m. Thursday, McNary pool will resume standard operation with no low-pool requirements. Lake Wallula’s normal operating range is 335-340 feet MSL. For reference, in January, the average forebay elevation at McNary was 338.40 feet MSL.

Other recent District operations on the rivers include spillway testing at Ice Harbor Lock and Dam, located near Burbank, Wash., at Snake River Mile 9.7, which is now completed; and the annual navigation lock maintenance outage at Corps dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers, scheduled to end Saturday, March 25, at 11:59 p.m.

For more information, please call the Public Affairs Office at (509) 527-7020.

Public notices and other navigation lock information are available on the Walla Walla District Web site at: www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/op/t/navdata/default.html. For more information about the District’s anadromous fish research, check out www.nww.usace.army.mil/planning/ep/fishres/newmain.html.

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